846 [514]

the fire for her during the first day or so, lest in her straining, Dūan's womb "move to a new place," but Duan did it herself thereafter. The smoke was harder on others than for her for she was on the floor. She could leave the plank to bathe and to relieve herself through a crack in the floor. As soon as Chāi got over being frightened of her turmeric-yellow stomach, he often came and lay beside her on the plank, though it was a squeeze! She took her medicine and often sipped hot water, feeling very modern with her brand-new thermos bottle. Constantly turning her back or front to the fire, she poked or dripped water on the flames to make coals. Once she tossed on a dry palm leaf, and as it flared up, put a cloth over her head to trap the smoke and heat. Though a rash developed on her body, she was complimented by Lek on the care she was taking of the heating and drying process. Unfortunately, a neighbor who wanted to help brought in some of the wood one day. Not remembering that to make noise with the wood caused diseased red eyes in the baby, she dropped the bundle with a crash! Alas, "sang" disease, of course, came at once. So the near-by mō who always cared for them had to be called, but he used no medicine. "For eyes red from 'sang'," he said, "never use any eye-medicine as drops, or they will be permanently damaged or blind. Such eyes have not enough resistance to win over the strength of the medicine. A drop of mother's milk, any mother's, in the eyes is the cure."

[753]

[757]

846 755

Uterus pain was said to last one day for the first child, 2 days for the second, and so forth, increasingly. As Dūan seemed to be in considerable pain, Lek resorted to an old cure: she secretly took the bamboo knife and the phlai from the baby's tray and put them under Duan's plank bed without telling her. Slowly the pain diminished.

846 789

If anyone spoke of uterus pain to her during the fire period, Dūan would suffer still more. If a visitor spoke of the hotness of the fire, little boils would appear on her body. The fire, being thus made too hot, would have to be put out, and Duan "would be weak for a long time." This was because actions or even words occurring beside the holy fire set a new and permanent pattern. Neighbor's children were kept away lest they inadvertently exclaim about the heat.

846 574

A few relatives with gifts of banana, turmeric, and face powder dropped in, but visitors mostly stayed away. "It is an ugly sight," said Dūan, "lying here with only a cloth over me, half naked and yellow, and I fear there might be an unpleasant smell."

854

The winnowing tray, with the baby on a pillow now covered with a plastic cloth, rested on a low table, the legs of which stood in bowls of water to keep away ants. At first an old dome-shaped fish trap had been set over it to prevent draft and

264 would not come willingly to work. When a family with a repu-
476 tation for stinginess diluted the (3)khaaw (3)tom too much,
[574] the group refused to eat any, thereby reminding the host of his obligation for hospitality.

574 Guests to whom meals were served fell into four categories: 1) kin, 2) visiting dignitaries, 3) priests and 4) drinking companions. Kinfolk who came as guests were married children, or those who were away at school or work, or kinsmen from Bangkok or elsewhere. The older the relative or the greater the distance travelled, the greater the honor accorded him. Foods were exchanged. Two visiting ladies travelling in a large boat, made an annual round of all their relatives, bringing certain "city" foods and receiving substantial gifts of rice, fish and fruit. They stayed for several days as guests of one family, then moved on. Every person from Bang
[431] Chan who visited a relative in Bangkok carried big packages of food, usually rice or eggs, as gifts. With the inflated prices in Bangkok, it was advantageous to have a "country cousin' who might bring food. Visiting kinsmen always recognized the need for eventual reciprocity.

Visiting dignitaries were usually entertained by hamlet headmen. Meals served to visiting officials, policemen and others might be elaborate, involving cooperative help in preparation, but reciprocity, if any, rarely took the form of a return meal.

[792] Regular visits of the priests, as well as the invitation of priests to the house for special events, have been mentioned. Priests might also come from afar, usually staying at the temple but receiving generous offerings of food from people of the community.

[562] The custom of convivial get-togethers of either or both sexes was well established. Men traditionally enjoyed "stag" dinners of four up to twenty or more whenever the ingredients for a turtle, frog, cobra or other snake curry were available. Chicken curry might also be thus served, and once a catfish mash was prepared by a male visitor from the north. These curries were cooked by men, and the host served liquor freely.
[784] The all-male character of the occasion reflected the old re-
[788] strictions on women's partaking of flesh foods (see p. 42),
[213] but older women did not hesitate to join in the drinking.
[524] Women also got together in drinking parties, sometimes to play cards.

In addition to sharing food with people in these four categories, the general rules of hospitality required that anyone who came to the house at meal time, should be offered food, or at least a drink of liquor, tea, or plain water.

756 The actual ritual of these ceremonies did not take a great deal of time although it was important. Most of the
[676] time and effort went into preparing and serving food. Even a small celebration involved cooperative effort among relatives
[782] and friends. For every event, the Buddhist altar in the home was decorated and offerings were made to the house-spirit. A
764 big cremation might require planning in detail for years ahead:
796 invitations to priests and relatives in distant parts of the
574 country; hiring an orchestra and obtaining ceremonial gear.
533 For the largest events, when the guest lists ranged upward to
[426] 60 or so priests and 400 other guests, one borrowed the hundreds of trays, dishes and bowls owned by the temple. No rental fee was charged for these, but such items had to be returned the next day, clean, and damaged articles replaced or paid for. As the day or days drew near, boat-loads of fresh provender were bought at big markets, and organized cooperative cooking went on under the direction of a competent person,
[252] usually one of the "professional" cooks of the village. The
[476] day before one ordination, 33 women were seen preparing vegetables, fish and soup; 13 others were making 7 kinds of desserts; about 50 others of both sexes were at different tasks, the men in particular cooking Chinese noodles, grating coconut, stirring, stoking fires. The picture was one of rows of stoves, pots so large they were stirred with a boat paddle, buckets of sugar, eggs by the hundreds, a hired generator to run a mechanical coconut-grater. On this occasion two meals were served. At another splendid (1)ngaan, the priests were fed three meals, other guests up to eight meals, over a period of two and one-half days. Workers had received additional meals beforehand.

[262] The banquet comprised rice and many dishes not met with in daily fare: Chinese noodles; "with-rice" dishes of several kinds, rich in fish, meat and vegetables: for example, fried chicken with internal organs, garlic and pepper; fried pork with mung bean; (2)mii (a fried vermicelli) with fish, vegetables, and a tomato sauce; many different desserts made of eggs, rice flour, glutinous rice, agar, coconut and coconut milk, sugar, sweet potato, dried green beans; flowers served in syrup, fresh fruit such as watermelon; ices and coffee.

128 In Appendix A, p. 102 is a list of foods bought for an
262 annual homage-to-the-teacher rite. It is the nearest approxi-
796 mation to a quantitative record of food for a ceremony that
895 the research group obtained. The prominence of purchased foods, especially of flesh foods, is noteworthy.

264 On the great day, the priests were served first, either
796 at 7 a.m. or 11 a.m., or both, always at least in part by the
792 host, who sat and chatted with them. No one else ate until

the priests had finished[1]. The trays of food from which each guest served himself were bountiful, but it was not proper to eat very heartily, lest the host suffer the shame of running out of food. If there were a dramatic show or movie at night it was open to the public. In one case 2000 people attended. At that time eight commercial venders turned up to sell coffee, soft drinks, ices and other foods. Venders came to every large ceremony, and were heavily patronized. At the end of a (1)ngaan, the sponsors felt satisfaction and security. Where there was plenty of food to take home, the success was even greater. An earthy compliment was, "the fields were full of feces."

In addition to the banquet were ceremonial offerings of food to spirits and ritual food sometimes consumed as a sacrament. For each ceremony, appropriate selections were made from a specific list: a cooked pig's head, or at least a slice of cooked pork; two kinds of sweetmeats, red ((2)kha-(5)nom (3)tom (1)daeaeng) and white ((2)kha-(5)nom (3)tom (5)khaaw); a cooked fish, usually (1)plaa (3)chauaun, with its head and tail; a green coconut with its coconut water; a bunch of bananas either of the (3)kluaj (4)nam-(4)waa or (3)kluaj (4)nam varieties; a hard-boiled egg, usually duck; and liquor.[2] Other kinds of sweets, fruit, sugar cane, items for betel chewing, chicken, salt, and rice might appear. As these ceremonies were thought to be auspicious, purifying, therapeutic and protective, they were most elaborate at the great (1)tham-(1)khwan (soul-strengthening) ceremony, at house-raisings and at rites to local guardian spirits. The necessity of these ceremonies explains why when public structures were raised, a portion of the public funds were used for a repast. In Bang Chan when donations for a new school

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1. Other priorities in service might be observed; for example, at a celebration preceding ordination the priest-candidates were served next. At one small affair, when 11 priests came to a home to conduct a service for a disabled old man who could not go to the temple, this elder was served after the priests, then the research group who counted as visiting dignitaries, and finally the other family members, with the women who prepared the food, and the children, eating last. The general sequence prescribed by etiquette was: priests should be served before anyone else, old before the young, the males before females, persons with high status such as teachers and ceremonialists before low, urban before rural. Those who cooked and served came last of all. When the number of participants was large, guests might be served, as they arrived, over a period of hours.

2. The presence of meat, fish and alcohol is this ceremonial food reflected non-Buddhist elements in Thai culture, and should not be viewed as a gross violation of Buddhist precepts.

435 Some information as to the cost in baht of the larger
796 ceremonies held in 1954, and their scale, was obtained from
[126] the school teacher's diary. Examples follow:

[792] Ordination: Total cost 8,000, including food 1400, liquor 800. Guests contributed 4000.

[852] Top-knot tonsure: Total cost 1550, including new utensils 550; 6 priests fed; each priest given 12 baht; 12 (2)pin-(1)toos filled to take to the temple; 100 duck eggs donated, and 300 baht received from 30-40 guests.

[714] Cremation[1]: Total cost 40,000[2], including about 10,000 for food; 61 priests fed[3]. About 500 guests contributed 4377.

[875] Homage-to-the-teacher ritual:
A: Total cost 715, including food 565 and liquor 150; 40 tang (800 liters) fish and 3 tang Chinese noodles donated.
B: Total cost, 11,000[4].

[585] Wedding: A: Thai Buddhist: Total cost 5000. Guests gave 2300.
[583] B: Rite of forgiveness after elopement: a meal, with 5 bottles of liquor.
[184] C: Moslem: 2 buffalo slaughtered. 400 guests.

585 Arranged marriages could be large merit-making affairs,
262 with a huge procession from one house to the other of twenty-
four "pairs" of specified foods, i.e. two bearers each of
[583] sugar cane, fruits, sweetmeats and other things. At more modest weddings and the rite of forgiveness for a couple who had eloped, food might differ from the usual fare only by including the three essentials of a wedding: pork, chicken and alcohol.

273 Increased consumption of alcoholic beverages during the
796 ceremonial season was indicated by the sales of one local
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1. Cremation was the last of several rites at death. Private 7-day, 30-day and 100-day rites were held, when priests came to the home to chant and to be feasted.

2. With cooperative assistance from well-situated relatives in Bangkok.

3. The whole chapter of priests from Wat Bang Chan
[792] was always included at cremations, and often others from a
[574] distance.

4. See list of food purchased, Appendix A, pp. 102-103.

443 storekeeper: about 800-900 liter bottles per month during
273 the 3 months dry season as compared to about 350 bottles per
796 month during the 9 months of the rice season.

184 Moslems never served liquor at their weddings, crema-
[273] tions, and other auspicious events. Moslem residents occa-
sionally attended Buddhist (l)ngaan in spite of dietary pro-
[262] scriptions that Buddhists did not observe.[1] A medium (spiritualist) commented however that because pig's head was essential for her homage-to-the-teacher rites, some Moslem sick persons preferred to go to the Buddhist temple for treatment. There the priest-practitioner could afford to set up a separate kitchen for his Moslem patients, and so spare them the distress of confronting pork. To one big ordination Moslem guests brought their own food. Buddhists came somewhat more often to Moslem ceremonies.

262 We do not have enough information to appraise the nutri-
574 tional significance of food eaten at ceremonies. Some indi-
476 viduals got a great deal of it, others very little. One must
264 remember that the (l)ngaan was not a public but a private event at home, to which guests came on invitation. Although cremations and the teacher-rites of priest-practitioners were held at the temple, and so had a semi-public character, no one who was not invited presented himself for food. Of the participants, the working group undoubtedly received the most food; they were there the longest time, had regular meals, tastings and snacks throughout the (l)ngaan meal itself. This group comprised the host, co-sponsors and their immediate kin; other relatives and friends who were asked or who volunteered to help. The feeling was, if one were "very fond" of the host, one volunteered to cook. If less close, one was invited as a guest, but made the usual cash donation. Sociable persons combining skill and energy were invited often and volun-
[881] teered often, hence spent many days at ceremonies. Young unmarried men and women were asked and liked to be asked to work, for such occasions offered a great chance for fun and flirting.

114 Different degrees of participation may be estimated
476 from Janlekha's (1955) figures for reported contributions
796 ranging from 30 to 1000 baht in a year. Since a contribution of 5 to 10 baht per (l)ngaan was customary, the villager with the lowest reported contribution probably attended from 3 to 6 ceremonial occasions. Attendance at 100 or more (l)ngaan is unlikely, hence the villager who gave as much as 1000 baht probably made larger contributions per (l)ngaan.

574 What sort of persons or groups in the village were in-
796 vited as guests? Every host's list included his older

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[702] 1. Moslems were said to resist army service because they were afraid they would have to eat pork.

196 relatives, his other kin and friends according to bonds of
574 affection and respect. Certain priests of pleasing personalities, wide acquaintance or kinship in the community, or of valued skills, were invited more often than others, as were prominent elders and hamlet headmen. An invitation usually went only to the elder couple in a family. It did not automatically include the children. If married sons or daughters were invited, they were asked separately. Poor individuals were included only in the festivities of their close kinfolk, their immediate neighbors, maybe their own hamlet headman, or persons to whom they were obligated. Unless they were aged, their presence was validated only by hard work. Reciprocity was a factor, for one who could not reciprocate presumably would not be asked, nor would he volunteer. The few who were "anti-social" for whatever personal reason rarely attended.

268 Most members of the working group and guests left at
574 home their children of such age as to require watching.
196 Nursing babies might be there, hung in a hammock. Though
858 the children who ran excitedly about seemed numerous, most of them were the children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews of host, co-sponsors and relatives, so could not be excluded.

To sum up, those who shared least in the diet of the ceremonial season were the dependent children, i.e. up to the age of 6 or so, the less gregarious, and the poor who had no way to reciprocate. Children from 7 to adolescence shared in a limited way, attending (l)ngaan of their own close kin or of a geographically close neighbor. Parents sometimes took snacks from the feast home to the children. On the other hand, persons of prestige and popularity, especially if aged, were asked frequently.

262 Doubtless for those who attended many (l)ngaan, the
796 food eaten during the ceremonial season differed considerably from the usual family fare. We have no way of knowing whether it was better than usual because of a larger intake, for instance, of pork and meat in general, or whether the total nutritive value was less satisfactory because of increased consumption of "empty calories" in the form of sugar and alcohol.

262 During the (l)ngaan season the home meal schedule was
264 frequently disrupted in the families of the participants.
796 The main cook might be absent, too tired, or too full to feel like cooking a big meal at home. In anticipation of a feast, preparation of the usual breakfast or dinner or both might be abandoned, with reliance on a few snacks for the stay-at-homes to add to their rice. Thus the food intake of family members who did not attend the ceremonials might be adversely affected.

000 One other aspect of (l)ngaan which should be mentioned

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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harvest time, serve to create a rite of intensification as family members decide together what work will be done by whom, arise early in the morning to work together happily in the fields—sometimes for as long as fourteen hours at a stretch—and actually see the fruits of their coöperative labor mount up on the threshing floors. The sense of familial solidarity and intradependence, and its associated feelings of love, is experienced by all.[18] Also, since harvesting more often than not involves working reciprocally with other families, the host of a reciprocal labor group giving a feast whenever possible at the end of the day, it serves, although to a lesser extent, to intensify feelings of membership in the larger community.

Summary

In my discussion of the "cultural background," I have dwelt primarily on kinship because the family is functionally the most significant social unit in the village and because it is within the context of kinship that personality is developed and, in Bang Chan, most frequently expressed. None of this is meant to imply a lack of importance for other social units—the monastery, the school, the state—or for the non-institutionalized relationships—friends, drinking partners, and business contacts. However, kinship does provide the basic psychological model for all human relationships in Bang Chan,

[18] Although the annual cycle of Thai peasants is described in detail in the available ethnographies on Thai rural life (deYoung 1955, Fraser 1960, Kaufman 1960, Kingshill 1960, Sharp *et al.* 1953) a few words should be added about the psychological dimensions of this cycle. Thus familial solidarity, intradependence, and love are not the only sentiments that are heightened during the harvest period. Perhaps the most striking quality of this season (December to January) is the increase in the optimism, joy, and general psychic well-being of the villagers: people laugh more loudly than usual; they relish telling about the things they are going to buy; parents take more kindly to the gallivanting of the children. These months contrast with transplanting time (late July to early August) and the period prior to harvest (October to November), when an overabundance of rain can destroy the villagers' rice seedlings or their entire crop. These latter periods are marked not so much by anxiety as by a sense of watchful waiting. All these contrast with the Dry season when things are especially quiet in Bang Chan and when villagers spend their time repairing farming equipment and houses, gossiping, or are working on jobs outside the community. Villagers say that of the three major seasons of the year (Dry, February to June; Rainy, June to January; Cold, January to February) they like the Rainy season best. The season coincides with the rice-growing cycle, is marked by Buddhist Lent and, excepting a final week of Monsoon downpour, is in fact the most comfortable period of the year.

These seasonal activities and attitudes also have direct implications for field work. Thus, while villagers gave freely of their time during the dry season and after the harvest, and during the latter were especially outgoing and benign, many simply would not see me during the weeks of planting and harvesting. The benign attitudes of villagers interviewed after the harvest were reflected directly in the data, as were the noncommittal responses of some villagers who were interviewed during transplanting time.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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achievement, and dependency, or by discussing those traits which are significant in the daily round of life, irrespective of the analytic categories to which they refer. In this section we will emphasize the latter, more naturalistic approach. Its advantage is that it permits us to identify and develop certain issues which play a crucial role in the interactive world of the villagers, but which might otherwise go unnoticed should they not be represented by, or not quite fit, any of the predetermined categories. The Thai attitudes toward the body referred to earlier, for example, is an issue of extreme importance in their interpersonal relationships, but one that is actually given little explicit attention in most personality studies. This section is designed in part to deal with such problems, although inevitably there may be some overlap between the materials covered here and those discussed in later sections.

The Pleasures of Social Contact

Of all the personality traits that come to the attention of the foreign observer there is perhaps none more compelling than the affability, gentleness, and good humor of the villagers. It is difficult to think of a people more consistently ready, *once contact has been made*, to treat others amicably and convivially than the peasants of Bang Chan. (The italics are necessary simply because the villagers are equally primed to ignore others.) However, this jovial cordiality is not an easy thing to conceptualize. In the earlier paper by Hanks and Phillips (1961) we spoke of these happy characteristics as "not so much the expressions of any basic lightheartedness as they are techniques for implementing the main precept of social interaction: 'Avoid face-to-face conflict!'" Although the villagers' good humor does serve this purpose, I would now suggest that it involves several additional dimensions and motives.

First, there is a whole complex of responses represented here. The tendency to keep situations and conversations jocular, amusing, and at times gently ribald, is perhaps the most relaxed expression of this attitude. It is most obvious in the behavior of village gossip groups and in the relationships between individuals who consider themselves acquaintances but not quite close friends. The essential ingredient of this mode of affability is that interaction should be a great deal of fun but of little social consequence. Of a different order, and more common, is the villagers' ubiquitous politeness. This takes a host of forms: the genial hospitality that is expressed toward a newcomer, usually in the form of "personal" questions serving both to identify the person and to make him feel that others are interested in him ("How old are you? Any children? How much did you pay for your shirt or your land? Why don't you have any children?"); the numerous linguistic

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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and postural forms expressive of respect cited earlier; the repeated hesitation to place others in embarrassing situations; the hesitation to tell others bad news so that "they will not feel sad" or will not have to dissemble (although more often the less delicate reason is the person's fear of embarrassing himself). Of a still different order is the uneasy affability that is expressed in the nervous giggling accompanying many face-to-face relationships and in the compulsive preoccupation with inconsequential or inoffensive topics while conversing with others. These responses appear to be either attempts to maintain minimal contact with others while jockeying to find out what they are really up to, or, in the negative sense, efforts to fulfill the minimum requirements of interaction while waiting (and hoping) for the contact to come to an end. And still different from all these is the affability associated with trying to make a good impression on others expressed in the constant concern with displaying good manners, with using pleasing or flattering words, with being a good host, and the like. Although this category is in many respects behaviorally similar to the "politeness" referred to above, it seems to differ from the latter motivationally in that it is concerned not with the state and comfort of others *per se*, but with ego's effect on others.

As described above in simple summary terms, these responses might appear quite ordinary and at certain times applicable to any group of human beings. However, what impresses the observer in Bang Chan is the insistence and constancy of their use. These are precisely the forms that the villagers choose in the vast majority of situations for expressing the degree and quality of contact that they feel toward others. That they are in fact social forms—stylized, often ritualized, modes of behaving—should not be overlooked. It is just this characteristic that engenders the theme underlying all the responses and which indeed sets the tone of most Thai interaction: that the relations between people should be friendly, genial, and correct, but need have little personal commitment or involvement. As will be seen below, it is this readiness to phrase most face-to-face contact in terms of social rituals while at the same time feeling little commitment to others that actually lies at the root of what has so often been called Thailand's "loosely structured social system."

Social Play

The first response mentioned above, the tendency to turn social situations into occasions for play, is probably one of the most common of all human tendencies (it is certainly one of the earliest), but one that strangely has received little attention in the psychological literature. The few writers who have expressed any interest in social play have tended to view it simply

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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609 Of the various forms politeness takes, its most relaxed, least contrived
• 574 form in the cordiality that villagers extend to newcomers. Strangers to Bang Chan are hardly swept off their feet, but once contact has been established, they are welcomed with a degree of attention far exceeding simple tolerance of their presence. People express a curious interest in them as individuals, as if somehow their presence were adding a new dimension to the lives of their hosts. In the case of many Bang Chaners, this is probably true: the lives of these villagers are sufficiently routine and insular that the appearance of a new face is identified also with the advent of a significant and new experience. Still other villagers approach the newcomer with an attitude that says in effect: "One should try to meet and know as many persons as possible. Who knows what good may come of it?" The implied meaning here is that the cursory contact may in time develop into a firm relationship of reciprocal rights and obligations, whereby person A could turn to B to borrow money, ask his help in finding a job, help sponsor his son's ordination, and vice versa. There is in this attitude a sense of gentle optimism combined with opportunism. And still other villagers, probably the majority, approach the newcomer with no self reference at all, but with the simple intention of trying to make him feel comfortable. Whatever the intention in each case, however, the dominant behavior exhibited to the newcomer is openness, amiability, and curiosity.

576 The actual expressions of conviviality are at all times simple and
574 straightforward. They involve asking the person such questions as his age,
521 place of birth, whether he is married, or whether he has yet served in the
609 monkhood. (Notice the phrasing of this last question. The polite Thai form is never whether a person has been a monk or not, but rather whether he has already been a monk or not *yet* become one. The syntax of the interrogative form assumes the good intentions of the other person.) If the individual is identified as coming from a locale with special or distinguishing characteristics, the conversation will often involve humorous allusions to the place. For example, if he is from the North, there will most likely be joking references to the beautiful women of Chiengmai; if he is from the Northeast, to the funny accent of the people of that area. If the relative statuses of visitor and host can be quickly identified (based upon age, clothes, speech patterns, and occasionally surname), the conversation may turn to topics whose very purpose is to emphasize status considerations and thus make the participants more comfortable with one another. If they

*156 difficulties (ask his father to save the family land for him; tell the aunt he did not
159 want to marry the girl she had chosen—which he could have done had he felt secure about his relatives' love for him), he politely said nothing. The net result of all of this, as indicated in the text, was a deep sense of personal inadequacy and resentment that loved ones cannot be depended on. Further, Dang had begun to treat others as he felt others had treated him.

4:Phillips E-4,5 (1956-1957) 1966
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are social peers, the Bang Chaners would easily turn the conversation to a discussion of the technical aspects of rice farming or even gambling. The latter would likely be discussed with a social superior only after some acquaintance. On the other hand, if one were clearly the other's superior, the superior would probably talk not about the methods of rice farming but, more generally and benignly, inquire, "Is all going well with you? Is there any way I might help you?" He might even proffer some unsolicited advice or aid. The tone and theme of the conversation would be expressive largely of the superior's concern with the welfare of his new-found friend, which the latter would typically accept.

All this is usually accompanied by gentle laughter and careful attention to appropriate pronominal forms. The good host will also serve his guest rain water, and if possible, scented rain water. If opportunity and finances permit, he may even offer him a warm Coca-Cola. The youngster who will actually serve the refreshment will make sure that it is on a coaster and that his hands are in the proper ritual position when he offers the drink to the guest. Such are the ingredients from which potential friendships are made.

Although the particulars of the kind of politeness found among family and friends are different from the above, the forms are essentially the same. Villagers do not talk about the funny accents of the people who live next door to them, nor do they rush to serve scented water when a brother comes to call. But they do take pains to express respect for each other by using proper honorific and pronominal forms, by looking to the oldest competent family member for advice, by talking of subjects that are pleasant and amusing, but never threatening or embarrassing.

The avoidance of embarrassing topics—even when the airing of such topics may be crucially important or beneficial to one of the parties concerned—is one of the most pronounced facets of village social life. To a Westerner accustomed to outspokenness, the types of situations that villagers define as embarrassing and the lengths to which they will go to avoid them sometimes appear to border on the sado-masochistic. Detailed interviews with two women whose husbands had taken second wives, for example, indicate that although at the time they were deeply disturbed by their husbands' actions (primarily for economic reasons; secondarily for emotional-sexual ones) they never once even brought the subject up with their husbands. They explained that they were too *ʔaaj* (embarrassed) to do so. In neither case was this embarrassment expressive of any feeling of inadequacy on their parts (the fear of hearing their husbands say, "I took a second wife because you are not adequate"). It was prompted rather by the desire to avoid an awkward and potentially rancorous confrontation. They did not want to put anybody on the spot. (Whether such a confrontation would *actually* lead to overt rancor is almost impossible to ascertain because

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)p956 AO7 Central Thai AO7
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*243
*128 This was one of the easiest jobs of the whole study.
433 There were few cases where we did find anybody at home
434 and there were many more where only young children
[574] were seen. Since a Thai farm home is considered an open house to fellow villagers, we simply took liberty of walking right through and made an inspection by ourselves. Thus in a period of less than a week we were able to secure the figures of paddy stock on hand of every single operator in the sample.

The amount of paddy stock alone simply indicates but not represents sale in the second period, for a certain portion must be saved for seeds, consumption and feed. It is rather simple, however, to calculate the amount saved, for we were already in possession of work areas from which the amount of seeds may be estimated and we knew the size of the family (in terms of both actual number and consuming units) from which consumption may be figured.

*243 In this second period, sale was made when the
432 farmer thought the price was high enough. Usually,
434 the prices of paddy were about 15 - 30 per cent higher during this period than in the first period when supply was high. The rate of shrinkage should be taken into consideration, however, for prices are expressed in volume. It is rather unfortunate that we do not have any official record for this vital rate of shrinkage. In our daily log, however, the following testimony appears: